

Burien Community Center (Annex and Skate Park)  
425 S.W. 144<sup>th</sup> Street  
4.8 Acres

The establishment of the Highline Community Center (now the Burien Community Center) was brought about by the countywide Forward Thrust program of the late 1960s, through renovation of a surplus elementary school site (Chelsea Park). (History of King County's Park, Recreation and Open Space System, Caroline Tobin, March, 1992)

The Burien Community Center occupies the buildings and grounds that once were Chelsea Park School, which closed in 1976. The Center today sits next to a lovely, multifaceted park that includes a popular skatepark, basketball court, picnic tables and open grassy spaces, and is the site of Burien's annual June Strawberry and Arts Festival.

Local teacher Tom Sahle helped raise the money for the skatepark and even did much of the concrete work himself. (Telephone interview with Pam Harper, August 9th, 2007)

The Community Center has meeting spaces for businesses, groups and organizations, including nearly a thousand square feet of meeting rooms, a 1,650-square-foot conference room, a kitchen and 900-square-foot dance/yoga studio. It is a great place to hold a meeting, party, wedding or special event.

During four months in the fall, winter and spring, the Auditorium is used on weekends for Burien Little Theatre productions. The Burien Little Theatre, King County Recreation Division's first in-residence community theater program, was established in 1979.

In 1994 the City of Burien negotiated the assumption of responsibility for Burien Park and the Highline Community Center with King County. Newly hired City staff began scheduling programs for Highline Community Center beginning with the 1994 spring quarter. Policies on facility use and fees were finalized in September, 1994. (A Review of Parks and Recreation Services in the City of Burien, Sue Barnes Blazak, 1994)

The Burien Community Center is beginning to show signs of its age, however. The Center's roof was damaged in the December 15, 2006 windstorm.